

School Term Dates and Holidays 2010/2011

Summary

- 1 This report:
 - Requests that term dates and holidays for the school year, 2010/2011 be formally approved.
 - Reports on action taken by the Local Authority (LA) to align the dates with those of neighbouring authorities

Background

- 2 The responsibility for setting the school term and holidays dates rests with the local authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools. Voluntary Aided schools have the discretion to set their own term dates, but do not usually depart significantly from the pattern established for other schools in the authority.
- 3 It is a statutory requirement that schools are open for 190 days in the year. Teachers are required to work for a further 5 professional development days. Under current arrangements, the term dates and holidays decided by the LA allow for the full 195 days. Individual schools are free to decide on the timing of the 5 Professional Development Days which are usually added to the beginning and end of terms.
- 4 Parents and staff have often asked for greater regional consistency around term dates between local authorities and for earlier publication of those dates. In response, colleagues across the region have met to discuss establishing a set of guiding principles (Annex 1 to report of Director of LCCS dated 27 May 08 attached) to aid the setting of term dates. Colleagues attending these meetings agreed that new principles to govern term date patterns should be based on Local Government Association (LGA) principles, with some flexibility.
- 5 On 10 June 2008 the term dates for 2009/10 were formally approved at the meeting of the Executive Members and Children's Services Advisory Panel. The term dates for 2010/11 were also provisionally agreed (option 1) and the term dates for 2011/12 were provisionally set with a direction that a further report be brought to the panel in 2010 to confirm or amend the 2011/12 term dates as part of a paper which sets dates to 2014.

Consultation

- 6 The Authority is required to consult with the professional associations and has also chosen to discuss the term and holiday dates with all schools.
- 7 During spring term 2008, the LA undertook consultations with schools and the Joint Consultative Group on options for school terms and holidays in 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12 based on the regional discussions. The details of the consultation were outlined in the report of the Director of LCCS dated 27 May 08 (included in background papers provided at Annex 2)
- 8 Officers from the regional Local Authorities have continued to meet on a regular basis to as far as possible agree term dates. North Yorkshire Authority has agreed to adopt identical term dates for 2010/11 to those provisionally agreed in York. East Riding Authority are currently still in the process of consulting upon the term dates for 2010/11.
- 9 The regional meeting of officers has approached the LGA with a view to establishing a national lead on the setting of term dates. It is hope that the LGA will be able to attend a future meeting of the group to discuss the issue.

Analysis

- 10 The setting of term dates is a process which generates considerable interest and not always consistent views. The principles established on a regional basis are worthy but not always easy to apply in practice. All recognise the potential benefits and applaud the efforts to seek a more consistent regional picture as well as attempts to plan dates on a more than single year basis. More radical solutions have been proposed in the consultation but such change would be out of keeping with LGA recommendations and totally out of step with neighbouring authorities. More radical solutions possibly need a national lead.

Corporate Priorities

- 11 It is a statutory duty of the authority to set term and holiday dates. One key aspect of setting dates must be to support the teaching and learning experience and therefore decisions in this paper do relate to the corporate priorities of:
 - improving the life chances of the most disadvantaged and disaffected children, young people and their families in the city
 - Increase people's skills and knowledge to improve future employment prospects

Implications

- 12 There are no Financial, HR, Equality, Crime and Disorder Property or IT implications of this paper.

Legal

- 13 Under s.21 of the Education (No.2) Act 1986, as amended by s.115 of The Education Reform Act 1988, it is the duty (stated in the school's articles of government) of the LA, in the case of a county or controlled school, or governing body of an aided or special agreement school, to determine the dates when schools terms and holidays are to begin and end.

Risk Management

- 14 The responsibility to set term and holiday dates does not represent a major risk for the authority.

Recommendation

The Executive Member is recommended to approve the pattern of school terms and holidays for:

- 2010/11 (Option 1) as proposed in Annex 1

Reason: To provide clarity for parents, schools and pupils on term dates in City of York

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Report Approved Date

Report Approved Date

Specialist Implications Officer(s) *List information for all*

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annex 1 – Proposed term dates for 2010/11

Annex 2 – Background papers including decision from EMAP 10 June 08, and previous report from the Director of LCCS dated 27 May 08